

HRH Premier calls for global collective action against COVID-19

Bahrain initiative to establish UN taskforce welcomed at 'Bahrain Visions' forum

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His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa has called for a global collective action to bolster fight against the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

HRH Premier stressed the importance of strengthening the foundations of international sustainable co-operation and setting aside differences and building trust.

Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullahatif bin Rashid Al Zayani made the statements on behalf of HRH Premier during the opening of the "Bahrain Visions Forum: Shared Visions for a Successful Future".

In particular, HRH Premier launched an initiative to establish a taskforce comprising United Nations Member States supporting efforts of the UN secretary general and the director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to cushion the impact of the pandemic on the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN group will be named "Friends of the UN Secretary-General" on improving ways to counter the negative impacts of COVID-19 on Sustainable Development Goals' achievement.

HRH Premier's initiative was widely welcomed and backed by international organisations and high-profile personalities who took part in the event held under his patronage.



The forum in progress



HRH the Prime Minister noted the importance of a unified global strategy to ensure that resources and energies are directed towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Mankind's security and safety can only be achieved with the solidarity and co-operation

of all, HRH the Prime Minister stressed.

The event coincides with the High-level Meetings of the General Assembly, held on the sidelines of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 75), as well as the celebration of the United Nations General Assembly's 75th anniversary.

In his speech, HRH the Prime Minister noted the importance of a unified global strategy to ensure that resources and energies are directed towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

HRH Premier indicated that Bahrain, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, is keen to provide all support to the citizens and residents to guarantee the safety

of society and the health of all.

This has been done through the efforts of Team Bahrain, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, and the National Taskforce for Combating Coronavirus.

Bahrain has provided all health, social and economic facilities to the Kingdom's citizens and residents.

The Prime Minister also paid tribute to the Bahraini medical and nursing competencies for their remarkable patriotic role in addressing the pandemic, praising their commendable noble humanitarian efforts that continue to serve the community.

Finance Minister hails Bahrain's financial and economic stimulus package



Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa participates in the high-level meeting

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Finance and National Economy Minister Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa yesterday highlighted the pre-emptive and precautionary measures taken by the government of Bahrain to mitigate the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The minister was speaking in a virtual high-level meeting entitled "Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond".

Leaders of various countries and heads of governments participated in the event, held on the sidelines of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 75).

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa cited the launch of the financial and economic stimulus package consisting of more than 20 initiatives worth more than US\$11 billion, or the equivalent of a third of the Kingdom's GDP.

These initiatives include the payment of 100% of the salaries of Bahraini employees through the Unemployment Insurance Fund and the suspension of fees on the sectors adversely affected by pandemic

It aims to protect jobs, provide the necessary liquidity for the private sector, and ensure the stability of the labour market and all economic sectors, he said.

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa affirmed that Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 had played a major role in diversifying the economy and supporting innovation in a way that achieves

growth and prosperity for all citizens.

He underlined the importance of taking financial measures that would contribute to mitigating the economic effects of the pandemic through the optimal use of financial resources.

The minister noted that Bahrain has adopted the Fiscal Balance Programme for the sake of achieving the balance point by 2022, and is continuing to implement its initiatives in order to reach the desired goal.

The Finance Minister noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has drawn attention to the importance of the role of technology and digitisation in promoting economic sustainability, and made it necessary for everyone to accelerate digital transformation.

The Finance Minister also expressed the Kingdom's appreciation of the UN and its initiatives aimed at mitigating the effects of COVID-19.

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa pointed out that the pandemic and the economic challenges resulting from it require continued work and joint cooperation among all countries in order to overcome it and achieve global economic recovery.

He stressed the importance of continuing such joint co-operation and coordination among all countries.

The meeting also discussed the latest financial and economic developments and implications related to the pandemic and its impact on the economic sectors and global economy.

Strengthening GCC-Russia ties 'timely'

● Al Zayani praises role of Russia to reinforce peace

● The pandemic is having a direct impact on the region.

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Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullahatif bin Rashid Al Zayani has emphasised the great importance of strengthening relations between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Russia in the face of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Al Zayani was speaking during the joint ministerial meeting

between the GCC and Russia held virtually yesterday on the sidelines of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Anwar Mohammed Gargash, the UAE minister of State for Foreign Affairs, as UAE presides over the current GCC session, and the minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russia, Sergey Lavrov.

Al Zayani stressed the joint keenness to hold this meeting despite the current circumstances, noting that the pandemic is having a direct impact on the security and stability of the region.

The Foreign Minister praised the constructive role of Russia at the regional and international



Foreign Affairs Minister Al Zayani during the meeting

levels and its continuous efforts to maintain security and stability and reinforce peace in the region.

During the meeting, they reviewed ways to strengthen and deepen the existing relations of co-operation and friendship

and to advance ties to broader horizons at all levels, in order to meet the aspirations of both sides and achieve common interests.

Views were also exchanged on the most important regional and international issues of common concern as well as on developments in the region.

He lauded the participants for showing their common desire for joint action and mutual belief in the importance of dialogue for the present and future of all sides.

Also participating in the event were Oman Foreign Affairs Minister Badr bin Hamad bin Hamoud Al Busaidi, representatives of the GCC countries, and GCC secretary-general Dr Nayef bin Falah Al Hajraf.

Islamic finance online workshop launched

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More than 70 participants from 20 countries took part in an online technical workshop organised yesterday by the General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI), the global umbrella of Islamic financial institutions.

The Arabic-language workshop, entitled "Maqasid al Shariah in Islamic Finance", will

run until tomorrow.

The participants are representatives of Islamic banks and financial institutions, Regulatory and Supervisory Authorities (RSA), Academia as well as other international institutions.

Given the importance of Maqasid al Shariah in the context of Islamic finance, the workshop aims to look at Maqasid al Shariah, its objectives and classification before getting into the concept of Maslahah (Public

interest) as an important mechanism of Shariah.

It also covers Maqasid al Shariah's various implementations in the resolutions of Shariah Boards.

The online workshop involves a combination of lecture, interactive discussions, case studies, exercises and experience sharing sessions from various industry experts and Shariah scholars.

CIBAFI will continue to over-

come the current challenges by using innovative solutions and implementing alternatives for virtual initiatives and activities, thus will hold a number of technical webinar series in different languages.

CIBAFI Technical Workshops are aligned with CIBAFI's third objective of Training and Professional Empowerment which endeavors to enhance capacity building within the Islamic financial service industry (IFS).

HM King's advisor receives ambassador to Egypt



Al Mannai with Ambassador Al Jowder

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His Majesty the King for Youth and Sports Affairs advisor Saleh bin Isa bin Hindi Al Mannai received Bahrain Ambassador to Egypt Hisham bin Mohammed Al Jowder.

The advisor affirmed the strong relations between Bahrain and Egypt, and the ambassador's role in implementing

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's vision.

He praised Al Jowder's efforts in strengthening bilateral relations in all fields, especially in the field of youth and sport.

The ambassador confirmed his keenness to implement His Majesty the King's directives, highlighting the importance of Bahraini-Egyptian relations in various fields.